

did everything we asked them to do. We sent them overseas to fight an army; they are now caught in the midst of an insurgent civil war and continuing political upheaval. The United States will not and should not permanently prop up the Iraqi government and military. U.S. military involvement in Iraq will come to an end, and, when U.S. forces leave, the responsibility for securing their nation will fall to Iraqis themselves. However, whether or not my colleagues agree that the time has come to withdraw our American forces from Iraq, I believe that all of us in Congress should be of one accord that our troops deserve our sincere thanks and congratulations.

I very strongly believe that our Nation has a moral obligation to ensure that our veterans are treated with the respect and dignity that they deserve. One reason we are the greatest Nation in the world is because of the brave young men and women fighting for us in Iraq and Afghanistan. They deserve honor, they deserve dignity, and they deserve to know that a grateful Nation cares about them.

The legislation that I introduced today, the Military Success in Iraq Commemoration Act of 2007, pays fitting tribute to the valor, devotion, and heroism of those who fought in Iraq. First, this legislation provides an express acknowledgment by the Congress that the objectives for which the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) resolution of 2002 authorized the use of force in Iraq were achieved by the Armed Forces of the United States, which performed magnificently in battle. It specifically recounts several notable achievements of the Armed Forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In addition, this legislation authorizes the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the American people to observe a national day of celebration commemorating the Armed Forces' military success in Iraq. This will help ensure that the Iraq War does not suffer the fate of other open-ended engagements like the Korean War, which is often called the "Forgotten War." The soldiers who have served valiantly in Iraq deserve to be recognized and lauded when they return home.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation also authorizes funds to be appropriated and awarded by the Secretary of Defense to State and local governments to assist in defraying the costs of conducting suitable "Success in Iraq" homecoming and commemoration activities and in creating appropriate memorials honoring those who lost their lives in the war. Many of the casualties in the Iraq War come from small towns and villages in rural or economically depressed areas. The local governments are already facing substantial fiscal pressures and need help coming up with the necessary funds.

Finally, my legislation creates a program and authorizes funds to be appropriated pursuant to which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall award to each veteran of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom a grant of \$5,000 to facilitate the transition to civilian life. We don't want veterans to end up homeless or unemployed or unable to take their kids on a vacation or start a business. This \$5,000 bonus is but a small token of the affection the people of the United States have for those who risked their lives so that we may continue to live in freedom.

Mr. Speaker, outside my office there is a poster-board with the names and faces of

those heroes from Houston, Texas who have lost their lives wearing the uniform of our country. To date, the U.S. Department of Defense has confirmed 3838 casualties in Iraq. It is humbling to recognize how lucky we are to live in a Nation where so many brave young men and women volunteer knowing they may be called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice so that their countrymen can enjoy the blessings of liberty. The intent of my legislation is to pay fitting tribute to these great men and women and to let them know they will not be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing the efforts of our brave men and women in uniform and to ensure that they can successfully transition to civilian with dignity. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 110TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here this evening along with my colleagues from our freshman class. It is Halloween, and we are happy to be here. We know that our friends and neighbors are celebrating the holiday with their families, but we are going to talk about a little trick or treat, if you will, tonight. In addition, we are going to talk about some things that tie into a little bit of a Halloween theme and what is important in America right now. Back on the streets and back in the homes of the families that are very, very concerned about our country and the opportunities that their children have, taking care of their parents and grandparents, these are things that we recognize as all Members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans, that we have a responsibility to work with our businesses and our community leaders and our families to make sure that we make life a little bit better.

Before I get into some of the details, I am going to yield to the president of our freshman class, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ).

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here tonight with these great legislators to do several things. One is to reiterate the responsibilities of the first branch, article I of the Constitution, the House of Representatives and the Senate as co-equal branches of our government, and also to highlight by the use of finally reinstating after 6 years of capitulation to the administration, finally illustrating to the American people what can be done when there is a coequal branch of government.

As my colleague from Florida was speaking about Halloween, our children are home celebrating Halloween. And the President was very clever today when he talked about a bill that he saw disguised as a trick. This bill he talked

about is the SCHIP legislation which has 43 of our Nation's Governors supporting it, 273 Members of the House of Representatives, 68 Senators, and 81 percent of the American public.

What the President does not realize any more is there is a coequal branch of government functioning here. The President also said we have been wasting time. This perception of Congress failing is not something that is done by chance. It is done on message. Many Members know that a former Speaker of this House, Newt Gingrich, when he talked about how to take control of this House, talked about the only way to do so was to destroy the credibility of this institution and to pull Congress down.

Make no mistake, there is very much an idea here of obstructionism, but I want to be very clear: What the President talks about wasting time is things like ensuring the richest, most prosperous nation on Earth provides health care for its most vulnerable citizens, its children. The measure of this society, if it cannot be by what we are willing to do for our children, I am not sure there is another measure. And as we consider ourselves a great Nation, of which we are, the idea that this President would use the idea of fiscal conservativeness, after spending trillions and trillions into debt, and wasting, as you heard one of our previous colleagues speak about, money that disappeared, the money that has disappeared in Iraq and the waste on the contractors alone would pay for this bill. And this President asked us not to ask those questions.

Well, if he thinks that looking for fraud, waste and abuse is wasting time, I guess his definition is correct. I would say it is our constitutional authority.

Making college more affordable for middle-class Americans, making homeownership a reality based on fair lending practices, not predatory lending practices. And making sure we care for our veterans and for our soldiers. Those are the things that this Democratic Congress came here to do. We face massive opposition from a President who never even uttered the word "veto" in his first 6 years, but now utters it every single day on legislation that will improve this country. So I am proud to be part of this new class and I am proud to be part of this movement to once again reassert our authority on this.

The President's definition of wasting time is this country's business that we are doing. He simply dislikes it because, as we all here agree, the President has a very different reality of what makes a great Nation. We would argue a great Nation is one that is founded on those principles that were so critically important to the founding of article I of our Constitution which my colleague is shortly going to discuss. I yield back, and I look forward to a lively conversation here about the real progress that is being made.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I thank the gentleman from Minnesota. I think you

have provided great leadership for all of us in our freshman class. We are freshmen now for 9 months.

As you said, what the President categorizes as wasting time and the notion that nothing is getting done, well, there are some things that are getting done. Most importantly, there are some things that are on the brink. We will talk about a couple of those things.

Before I turn it over to the gentleman who is going to talk about the balance of power and how we are going to get to where we want to go here, because that is the American value of our democracy, I am going to list a few of the items that we have passed in this Congress with Democrats and Republicans, Democrat leadership but Republicans coming together, many of them, and the President signed them. A couple of things that are very, very important, I know many of these subjects were talked about in our campaigns.

Many people said 9/11. The 9/11 Commission Report, a thorough report that unfortunately most of it was not adopted. It has been adopted by this Congress in full and paid for.

I come from an area in Florida where we have ports, two major seaports in my district, and many airports. Many of you from all over the country have the same thing. It's now fully funded. We are making sure that the cargo is screened and all of the cargo, whether seafaring or air, is moving along.

PAYGO. We all believe in strong fiscal management. You only pay as you go. No more guessing we are going to have all this money in the future. No more taking the war and not even counting it against the national deficit. We now have a standard that was passed unanimously in this Congress. You can only spend what you have, just like you balance your books at home.

We made ethics and lobbying a reform priority. We now have gift bans. I don't need a cup of coffee from a lobbyist. I can buy my own cup of coffee. It is a standard everybody should have, and now it is in place.

We passed America COMPETES which is an innovative agenda supported by Chambers of Commerce all over the country, putting our priorities first in math and science and making sure the high-tech jobs will stay here.

We have lower interest rates for education. We all know the importance of a college education is crucial. Every one of these bills I have ticked off so far, I have listed so far, were passed by this Congress and signed by the President. We are very, very proud of that. Again, we have to talk about it.

There is a water resources bill for those with water projects. In my area, it is the Everglades. Many have polluted rivers and lakes and water issues. That bill was passed overwhelmingly by the Congress. It is on the President's desk. He has said he may veto it. If he does, that may be the first bill that gets overridden because I think there are enough votes.

And we will come back to SCHIP. It is a bipartisan supported bill written by Democrats and Republicans, and it is a wonderful bill. But before we get to SCHIP, I want to turn it over to Mr. YARMUTH of Kentucky to talk about what our democracy is all about and how this balance of power needs to come through.

□ 1830

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida, and it's a pleasure to be here with my distinguished colleagues from the class of 2006 talking about the issues that confront this Congress and this Nation and also some of the issues that we have in dealing with the basic functioning of government, which is one of the reasons we're here tonight.

And I'm so happy that my colleague from Minnesota mentioned the President's statement that we were wasting time and doing many of these things. I can only think when I heard him make that statement, did he really think that maybe the Founding Fathers were wasting their time when they wrote the Constitution? Because the first thing they did when they wrote the Constitution was write article I, which established the Congress of the United States and vested all legislative powers in the Congress of the United States, not some of them, not those dealing with certain subjects, but all of them in the Congress of the United States.

And the reason they did that was simple. They had escaped. They had revolted to escape a dictatorial form of government when one person was the decider. We've had one person who thinks he's the decider in the White House, and we've had members of both parties who have been in the White House and felt that they were the deciders, but that's not what the Founding Fathers envisioned.

They envisioned a representative democracy in which people that they sent to decide how the government would affect their lives would make those decisions, and that's why they put article I first. That's why they created the executive branch in article II of the Constitution, and that's why when we act, whether it's to provide health insurance for kids, whether it's to provide resources for water projects throughout the country, whether it's to provide for the Defense Department for our soldiers, our brave men and women fighting overseas, for our veterans, whether it's when we try to create a new energy policy for this country, when we try to provide a sound and high-quality education for everyone in this country, that we're doing it pursuant to the powers, and not just the powers but the responsibilities that the Founding Fathers vested in this very body.

So, when the President says we're wasting time, I would beg to differ, because if we're wasting time, then the Founding Fathers wasted time when they wrote the Constitution.

And that's why it's so important that we focus not just on what we do here but why we're doing it and the fact that we are actually realizing the direction and the decisions made by those great men 220 years ago when they formed this Constitution that determines how we operate in this country and that has served this country so well for so long.

So I look forward to the next few minutes of discussion, and once again, I'm so proud to be here talking about how we're putting article I to use for the benefit of the American people.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the gentleman from Kentucky for really highlighting the importance of article I. I mean, it's something we all went to elementary school and middle and high school and learned about our Constitution, but it is that balance of power that really sets our country out from any other country in the world, any other democracy.

And I know the gentleman from New Hampshire has also taken a real lead in explaining and talking about the application of this and how the abuses have just been out there. So, if the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES), would share some of your thoughts with us.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I'm very glad to be here on this Halloween night. I'd like to think this is a treat for us, a treat for those who are listening to us or watching on television and in the country, although lots of folks are probably out with their kids trick-or-treating tonight.

But it is an absolute honor to be here with the Members of the class of 2006, and many of us are wearing article I buttons. And the importance of those buttons is to raise the awareness in Congress and around the country about the importance of the checks and balances in our system of government.

We spoke last week about some of these issues, and I was flooded with calls not just from my constituents but from people around the country thanking us for talking about the checks and balances in our system and explaining in as clear a way as we could the importance of our system of government and why the Founding Fathers put Congress first.

Many people think that Congress is three coequal branches of government. Many people think that the President and the House of Representatives and the Senate somehow are coequal when actually the Congress, in article I of our Constitution, as the people's House, as the voice of the people, is given preeminence.

It is the Congress that makes the laws, not the President. The President doesn't make the law. He's got to follow the law that Congress makes. It is the Congress that raises the money to run government, to fill the programs, and Congress that spends the money we raise. It is Congress that has the power

to assess taxes, levy taxes. It is Congress that has the power to declare war and only Congress that has the power to declare war.

And these days, as we contemplate very difficult issues of war and peace in the Middle East, our involvement in Iraq and around the world, those powers, the war powers of Congress, versus the powers asserted by this President have come into sharp focus and occasional sharp contrast. I believe that we're going to see in the days ahead those kinds of debates in this people's House as we discuss who has the power to take this country into armed conflict, who has the power to declare war or not, are we at war. These are questions that are going to be heard.

There's a very interesting example of the clash between the assertion of Presidential power, which we've seen here, and the real power that Congress has. Right now, as many of my colleagues know, the House Judiciary Committee, as well as the Senate Judiciary Committee, is investigating. These committees are investigating whether there was something amiss in the way the United States Attorney's Office was run, whether there was political interference with United States attorneys. And Congress, the Judiciary Committee, has issued subpoenas.

Subpoenas are the method by which a body that has the power to make witnesses come issues a subpoena that says to a witness, you've got to come and testify under oath. And Congress has issued subpoenas to two members of the White House, who previously were in the White House, Karl Rove and Harriet Miers. They have refused to come to testify before Congress, and a question arises.

Congress can hold them in contempt and then ask the Justice Department to enforce that contempt, and right now we're looking at a new Attorney General possibly for this country. He was asked, this Attorney General who was nominated by the President, he was asked whether or not if Congress holds these witnesses in contempt for not answering the subpoenas, would his Justice Department refer the matter to grand jury for criminal prosecution as Federal law requires. Mr. Mukasey, the nominee for the Attorney General, suggested that his answer would be no.

Now, this is not the law. That is not the proper balance for Congress and the President. He made, in addition, a startling claim. He claimed, this is the possible Attorney General of the United States, that the President of the United States could defy the law as it's written in Congress if he believed that it was his responsibility to defend the country. That is a huge exception to the rule that Congress' laws are supreme and it is Congress that makes the law and the President is to follow them.

So this issue, what is Congress' power, what are the powers given to us by article I and how we assert them, and the clash between congressional

power and Presidential power is alive today. It's going on right now, and it's of vital importance to the future of this country as we decide whether we are a Nation of laws or a Nation of men.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congressman from New Hampshire. I think you bring up something that although back home when people are thinking about these issues, they don't necessarily think about the battle between the President and Congress or the battle between the agency head and Congress.

But I think the bottom line is what you just said. It's about the rule of law. I mean, every American accepts the fact we're a Nation of laws, we live by the rule of law, and there's nobody that gets excepted from that, whether it's someone who's cleaning an office or whether it's someone who's an accountant or whether it's the President of the United States. We're equal, and it doesn't have to mean somebody's been elected or not. We're all under the same law. I think that's the bottom line of this whole consideration.

I now would like to bring into this conversation a colleague of ours from the freshman class, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the recognition. It's a great honor to be a member of this class and a Member of this Congress.

I can testify, having spent really a lifetime in local and State government, about the talent level that exists in this class and, to be honest, this Congress. There are numerous people who are committed to issues and have a wealth of talent and knowledge, and they put that to work on a daily basis to try to come up with the best solutions for the American people for a new direction in this country.

The gentlemen I'm with are four of the leaders in this class and in this Congress. I really want to commend the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) for bringing this article I issue to the fore. The op-ed written in the New York Times by Mr. Adam Cohen really brought forth all the points that Congressman YARMUTH thought about when he brought this campaign to our attention and the freshman class adopted it.

Article I does make it clear that Congress makes the laws and Congress is where the power starts. It's really supposed to be the strongest arm of government because it truly represents the people, and this House has 435 Members. Each Member in the history of this House, and there have been about 10,000 people who have served in this House over the history, have been elected. Nobody, if there's a vacancy, gets appointed. In this place, not like the United States Senate or your State legislature, there aren't any interim appointments. Every person is elected by the people at home and they're supposed to represent those people, and I think it happens here.

This House needs to assert its power, and one of the areas where it's been doing it, particularly in the Government Reform Committee which Mr. WAXMAN chairs, and looking into actions of this administration is also the Judiciary Committee, where I'm blessed to be a member with Chairman JOHN CONYERS. We've had the opportunity to look into the Justice Department, which Mr. HODES brought up. The Justice Department we found has politicized that office to the extent that it's really embarrassing I think to us as members of the committee, Members of us particularly who are attorneys and know what the attorneys and judges are supposed to be in terms of being impartial in the way they mete out justice, and I think to the judiciary at large in this country.

The politicization of that office has been greater than I think at anytime in the history of this country. The cases that have been brought we have found have been based, oftentimes, on the politics of who the defendant is.

We had the discussion last week of the case in Mississippi where one gentleman was indicted and another gentleman was not investigated. The gentlemen did the same exact thing. They each guaranteed loans, which was legal in Mississippi, to a justice, a Justice Diaz of the Supreme Court.

One gentleman made contributions that guaranteed a contribution of \$65,000. Another gentleman guaranteed contributions of \$80,000. The gentleman who guaranteed the \$65,000 was indicted and tried in a Federal court. The gentleman that made the \$80,000 contribution wasn't indicted or even investigated.

They each loaned a home to Justice Diaz when he had family problems and needed a new place to stay. They were co-owners of the home, Mr. Scruggs and Mr. Minor. The one gentleman who was the man that made the \$65,000 loan and was indicted was indicted for loaning his home to the Supreme Court justice. The other gentleman wasn't.

What were the differences in the gentlemen? Well, one man was one of the top ten contributors to John Edwards for President, a Democrat. One man supported Democrats and trial lawyer issues in Mississippi. He was indicted. He was convicted the second time, and he's spending now, started serving 11 years in jail and was fined \$4.5 million, 15 times what was recommended.

The other gentleman, man named Dickie Scruggs, is also a trial lawyer. He wasn't even investigated. He did the same exact thing. He donated a half a million dollars to Republican activity, a quarter of a million dollars to the Bush-Cheney reelection effort, and he, for whatever reason, may have nothing to do with it, he happens to be the brother-in-law of one of our colleagues in the Senate, TRENT LOTT.

So if you look at that case, and it's hard for anybody to look at it and think that there wasn't politically selective prosecutions, which makes

Lady Justice have to turn her eyes and maybe shed tears at what's happened in Mississippi. That's happened in Alabama where a Governor was indicted and convicted of things that ordinarily wouldn't even be investigated.

We've seen U.S. attorneys, Republicans, appointed by President Bush fired because they didn't go after Democrats or they didn't go after voting actions that people in the Republican Party wanted pursued.

So oversight's real important in the Judiciary Committee. We've seen it. And the Justice Department, I mean, that's an area where Caesar's wife should be beyond reproach. Every area of government should be beyond reproach, but justice first. Justice is supposed to be blind, and justice has not been blind, and the work of Chairman CONYERS and his staff and the members of that committee exposed much of that.

This Congress has done a lot of good. The idea that Mr. YARMUTH brought up from the President where he suggested we've been wasting time, that's ridiculous. The fact he's tried to veto bills or has vetoed bills and threatened vetoes shows we've been doing some things that are effective and good.

□ 1845

The minimum wage should have happened years ago. We finally got a minimum wage. The people at the bottom of the economic ladder needed that step up. We passed the minimum wage.

People that need a step up and to start college educations, they got Pell Grant increases, they got the cost of their loans reduced so they won't be saddled with high interest rates in the future on their loans. To help kids get a start and go to a college and to not, when they get out, have a tremendous debt to pay back is important. To be able to have Pell Grant money to give them a better start is important. These are two of the best initiatives that I think we have seen.

When I was a State Senator I worked on college scholarships, and I worked on minimum wage. I am happy to be in a Congress that have seen both of them effectuated and made a change.

We have looked at global warming, we have passed some bills that require renewable energies, and we have looked at bills that will help clean up our environment, which is definitely in jeopardy. And we have looked at the budget. We have put our future generations in debt, this administration and this Congress, by spending, spending, spending, not having a PAYGO bill.

The future of this country is in jeopardy because of the recklessness of the past Republican Congress and this President for spending too much money, sacrificing our goodwill overseas with a foreign policy that has been reckless after we had a President in Bill Clinton who had a balanced budget, a surplus, in fact, and the respect of the world for this country. We have lost the respect of the world, we have

lost our budget surplus, and, finally, we have restored a modicum of fairness by giving an increase in the minimum wage, increases to kids going to college, help with health care and work on the environment.

I am very proud to be a Member of this Congress, this class and this Congress, and the differences you see are healthy and good. Rubber stamp shouldn't exist in government. There should be healthy debate. The conflict of ideas produces better ideas. That's why this Democratic Congress is so important to the future of this country.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. We are very proud to have the gentleman from Tennessee as one of our colleagues and a great contributor to the freshman class, particularly on accountability. There have been so many members of our class that came in with the criticism of our campaigns that we had heard from so many people back home, who is the check and balance? Who is minding the store? What happened to that \$8 billion of cash that disappeared on the streets of Iraq? What's with Blackwater? What's with all these kinds of things? Who is checking what's going on here?

You know, it's one thing to say you are going to run things like a business, it's another to do it. Businesses have known checks and balances, shareholders, managers, things like that. Unfortunately, it wasn't happening with this government. It's now changing.

I am very proud of you and the others. I am very proud to have another gentleman with us, the gentleman from Vermont, who has been at the forefront of the committee itself, working with Mr. WAXMAN. I know you have been very vocal on these issues, so I am going to turn it over to the gentleman, Mr. WELCH, from Vermont.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Thank you. I really think that everything that the gentleman from Tennessee said is right.

The question that I ask myself at times is how is it, if we have been doing a good job and accomplishing the things that you recited, so many of the American people think we are not doing much at all, or we are doing a bad job? That is a sentiment that a lot of folks have. It's in conflict, in my view, with many of the concrete things that we have done here in the House.

I will tell you what I think it is. Back in Vermont, people are asking me, when are we going to stop the war, and when are we going to change the priorities of this country so that we are standing up for the needs of average, middle-income families and not just the wealthy, not just corporations who can get legislation passed.

They are also asking the question that Mr. YARMUTH has presented in very stark form, when are we going to reassert our own constitutional authority and be willing to stand up to the President? I am hearing from people in my State, really good people,

real Democrats, real Republicans, and they are saying even when Congress is right, it seems that they are not willing to stand up to the President.

I think some of the frustration is that on the war there has been no change by the President, despite the efforts of many of us in Congress, and that's a fact.

Number two, there has been some sense that even when we are right here in Congress, we are not willing to hold our ground.

I want to address both of those.

First of all, on the war, the bottom line reality is that the President of the United States has an immense amount of power. We have article I power, but he has executive power. Despite the fact that the people of this country voted across the country from Vermont to Ohio to Pennsylvania to California and chose a new Congress, and a clear message of that election and decision by the people was that we wanted a new direction in Iraq, the President ignored that election.

He then ignored that March vote of the House of Representatives where we put a date certain on ending the war, August of 2008. Think about where we would be and what kind of optimism we would have in this country if that legislation was signed by the President instead of vetoed.

Then the President, of course, dismissed the advice of retired generals who are critical of the war, and, of course, paid no attention whatsoever to the Iraq Study Commission. I have come to the conclusion that the President is not at all going to bend, no matter what, and we have to be willing to fight that battle with him day in and day out.

Second, on the priorities, there is good news. I mean, this House, oftentimes with a bipartisan vote, has shifted the priorities to middle-class needs. The minimum wage was raised. The student loan cost of interest was cut in half. Prescription drugs are going to be negotiated, price negotiations so we can lower the cost, make it more accessible to seniors, less costly to taxpayers.

All of this we did by returning to pay-as-you-go principles, so we are not going to bankrupt future generations. The largest increase in the veterans budget in the history of the country.

All of that is important. It reflects that we are actually walking the walk of trying to change priorities. It's not getting out into the public either because it can't get through the Senate or it gets vetoed by the President.

We are going to be talking, I guess, a little bit about children's health care. But that's an example where it was the right thing we did to insure 10 million kids in this country. The President vetoed it. We made some minor adjustments, not nickel and diming about which kids we take off of health care, passed it again, and we will be sending it back to the President. I think that's the type of thing that we need to do.

But I also do believe that any time this Congress has an opportunity to hold its ground and essentially embrace and accept the responsibility that the Constitution gives this Congress under article I, we have to do it, whether it's on war funding, when we believe we are right, we have to be able to weather the storm; whether it's on budgets that are going to get vetoed when those budgets reflect the bipartisan consensus in this body that they meet the needs of average people, and that they comply with our obligation to pay our bill as we go.

There is good news, but we also have to acknowledge that there is much more fighting to be done, and that it's time for us in the right circumstances to hold our ground, to be willing to weather the storm of criticism that will come from the White House machine and to stand up for that change and direction that I believe the people of this country voted for in November.

I thank the gentleman from Florida. Mr. KLEIN of Florida. And thank you, Mr. WELCH. It really was very well explained and easy to follow. I think what people in this country respect is the fight. The fight is good, but at the end of the days, results. The President has made it very difficult, unfortunately. He has been unwilling to come out of his corner. A lot of alternatives have been offered on the war, a lot of alternatives have been offered on SCHIP which we are going to talk about in a minute, a lot of alternatives.

As we have talked about already, there have been a lot of accomplishments, student loans, minimum wage, people competing in business. We have had a lot of good things so far which the President has signed, which is good. But there is more to do. We need to get him sort of out of the view that it's him versus the Congress, or his ideology versus the rest of the country. People want consensus. They want solutions.

I would like to turn to Mr. Solution himself here, because Mr. ELLISON from Minnesota has really totally been bringing a lot of consensus on a whole lot of issues, from our foreign policy issues to our domestic issues. I want to bring you into this conversation and please add some value to it.

Mr. ELLISON. Thank you, Congressman KLEIN. Whether it be from Colorado to Vermont, from Kentucky to Tennessee, to Minnesota, to Florida, no matter where we come from, this freshman class that we belong to is here to stay and here to say, very clearly, that we are reclaiming the coequal branch of this legislative body in our constitutional framework. We don't have another branch of government which we take orders from. We don't have to prove patriotism by servile behavior towards the executive branch. We stand up with doing our constitutional responsibility, and our only boss is the American people, not the President, not the courts.

Article I states, all legislative power herein granted shall be vested in the Congress of the United States. Part of that power is, of course, passing laws and, of course, all of you, my fine colleagues, have made it clear that we have been productive, we have been busy, we have been putting up the fight, and we have been passing legislation that this President should sign and, in fact, in many cases has signed. But we have also done something else which I am proud of, and that is provided oversight. We have subpoenaed people and made them come to these hearings. We have asked people the questions, the tough questions, and made them give forth the right answer.

Why, on the Judiciary Committee just this week, we had Mr. TANNER, who is the section chief of the voting section. He offered the opinion that, actually I wish I had it written down, because I don't want to get it wrong, but he offered the opinion that voter ID bills may affect seniors because they live longer, but when it comes to minority seniors they die, so it doesn't really matter for them. Chairman CONYERS issued that request for him to come to that committee, and we asked him questions about voting rights. We asked him about how that department was being run. We asked him the tough questions that Americans expect us to ask.

But that's not all. Chairman NADLER of the committee has had constitutional hearings, and we have had people come in and talk about important issues, and, of course, Representative COHEN has been there as well, on Guantanamo, on habeas corpus. These are the kinds of things that Americans are concerned about because America will never be a place where we give up on our constitutional protections and our civil liberties.

I just want to say that I am so proud to be a Member of this freshman class that is not only passing legislation, not only standing up for its right as a coequal branch of government, but is calling people on the carpet and asking the tough questions as it is our job to do. The American people expect us to say, What's going on? Tell us what's going on. What have you done? Why have you done it?

That is our job, and we will continue to do it, because we don't work for anybody but for the American people. Not the judiciary. Not the executive branch. We are enshrined in article I of the Constitution, coequal branch of government, that branch of government in which all vested power to legislate is inside of us.

Mr. KLEIN, I want to thank you for conducting yet another excellent freshman hour.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Thank you, Mr. ELLISON.

Just to follow up on the point, a number of our colleagues have been talking about the idea of oversight and accountability. Well, the simple answer is not just for the exercise of

bringing people in by subpoena or asking them to come in and talk, it's to learn from your mistakes.

It's a very simple principle. What do we teach our children? Learn from your mistakes. What do you do in business? You want to learn from your mistakes. That, of course, is what the whole purpose of this is. If we see something has gone wrong, accountability, some bad business practices that the government is involved with or paid for something they shouldn't have paid for, let's not let it happen again. That's the simple bottom line.

I would like to shift, because many of our Members are interested—thank you, Mr. HODES, otherwise known as Vanna White—Mr. HODES is holding up a little poster here which talks about the children's SCHIP plan. The SCHIP plan, as I think everyone is now familiar with, or many people are in our country, or certainly Members of Congress are, it's about making sure that children, low-income children can participate in a health care plan that's private health insurance.

It makes the parents pay on a sliding scale what they can afford. It leverages tax dollars. It does everything it's supposed to do. Our business community back home in my area loves it. It's very popular because instead of kids going to the emergency room, they are going where they should go, and that is to get doctor and preventative health care.

We have had a bipartisan plan that has now been passed twice out of this chamber, and the President vetoed it one time, and I guess he is going to veto it again, but bipartisan, Democrats and Republicans coming together, not everybody, but all the Democrats, I think, just about all, and many Republicans.

In the Senate, I think the Republicans are the ones who helped draft this. It really brings it together. A quick little fun thing on Halloween here, it talks about the trick-or-treat and the Republican plan, we are just sort of joking around a little bit, but we are calling it the trick, and the bipartisan plan the treat.

The Republican plan, which we are calling the trick, covers 8.3 million children. The treat, the plan that most of us are pushing, Democrats and Republicans, covers 10 million. This is an additional number of children that we believe are part of this plan that we want to get covered.

The targeting of low-income kids, in the Republican plan it targets fewer lowest-income children. In the Democratic plan, the one we just passed, it enrolls the lowest-income kids first, a goal that we all want to make sure that we are covering.

□ 1900

And of course there is a cigarette tax in both plans, the exact same cigarette tax to pay for it. The question though is, if the same amount of money is being raised, why are we covering 10

million in the Democratic bipartisan plan and we're only covering 8.3 million in the Republican plan? Where's the money going? So we obviously want to have the lowest taxes possible, but we want to cover the most number of children. And I know that that's something that I know the president of our class has been very interested in.

I know that Mr. PERLMUTTER from Colorado has joined us in our freshman class, has taken a lead in, and I know your experiences in Colorado. Maybe you can share some of your thoughts on the SCHIP plan with our group here in the Chamber today.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. And I thank my friend from Florida. This is a place where the Democrats and Republicans have come together to look after kids from hardworking families across this country. This is not something that is just given out, and it doesn't make any fiscal sense or anything else. This is for people coming from hardworking families where the kids don't have insurance. And instead of going to the doctors, which is the most fiscally prudent way for a kid to be treated, they have to go to the emergency room, and at the emergency room, then, we, the taxpayers, pick up the bill. It's the most expensive form of medical care we could have. So it makes utter sense that we provide insurance to 10 million kids across this country from hardworking families so that they don't have to go to the emergency room, so they can go to their doctor, get proper treatment. But that just doesn't seem to be acceptable to the President of the United States.

Here we are wanting to bring change. We promised our constituents that we were going to change the way this Nation's being run, and one of those places is providing insurance in a prudent fashion for kids from hardworking families. But we have a President who wants the status quo, does not want to assist the hardworking people in the middle, and those are the folks that make up my district. It's not a rich district. It's not poor. Financially, it's right down the middle and people are struggling. And one of the first things to go when you're putting food on the table is insurance. And we want to make sure that 10 million kids have that insurance in this country. We passed it once; we passed it twice. This President says he's going to veto it again. He's about the status quo. He calls himself prudent fiscally, a fiscal conservative. Just the opposite, ladies and gentlemen, just the opposite.

So my friends, you know, we came here to change the direction of this Nation. We passed a stem cell bill which would have provided relief to millions of people across this country or hope for them who have debilitating diseases. We passed the SCHIP bill for 10 million kids.

But this President, he doesn't want change. He wants things as usual. He wants Washington to run as usual. We are going to keep knocking on his door

until we change the direction of this Nation. And I'm happy to be part of a class that is going to fight every day to do the right thing for our constituents and for the future of this Nation.

And with that, I'll yield back to my friends from Florida or Minnesota or New Hampshire, although he's not my friend, because I lost a bet on the Boston Red Sox game. But I would yield back to my friends.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. The Colorado Rockies were playing. That's right.

We're going to turn it back to the gentleman from Minnesota to get some thoughts on SCHIP and other things.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. I appreciate it, and I appreciate the passion from my friend from Colorado. And he's exactly right. When we came to this Congress with a debt that was skyrocketed, no accountability, a President who said he was the decider and a Congress here that thought that their job was to just be an echo chamber for this President, much has changed. Unfortunately, the President doesn't realize that yet, and that's why we get a lot of gridlock that's happened.

But the gentleman brought up some very interesting points considering SCHIP and this idea of funding. I think that one of the issues that many of us agree on here is fiscal responsibility is an absolute priority because, unlike the previous Congresses, we understand that there will be a day of reckoning, and it will come for our children and our grandchildren. And it's putting this country in a position where I read an article here out of the Hong Kong Standard talking about where places around the world, when you would travel, and many of us have, where taxi drivers and store owners would take the U.S. dollars, they're no longer taking that. They're saying no because our currency is now seen as something that's not as stable, a nation that's in debt, a nation that's seen as a rogue nation to people. Those are the types of things that this administration did mainly because of what Mr. YARMUTH and the other members of this class have said, we did not exercise our right.

And as far as SCHIP goes, when we create a budget, and we want to balance this budget and we will, we understand it's far more than a fiscal document. It's also a reflection of this Nation's values and morals. And this issue of trying to cover our children, and I've heard my Republican colleagues say this is an attempt to expand coverage, to make it socialized or nationalized medicine.

Well, my colleagues have no real plan how to deal with this. They continue to pull this up. The bottom line here is the richest, most prosperous, greatest Nation this Earth has ever seen is leaving children uncovered. But it gets worse than that.

A Harvard study that recently came out shows one in eight of our veterans are not covered by health care insurance, those who have served this Na-

tion most honorably. This President has decided when he had fiscally irresponsible budgets, we couldn't balance the VA budget, the President simply made a great decision here. He cut off 400,000 veterans, sliced them off the bottom by saying they don't qualify. These could be combat veterans in my district making \$27,801. They are not injured in combat and they make too much money. Well, all of us know that's not going to buy you health insurance.

So this issue of SCHIP, this idea of trying to cover our veterans, what this President fails to realize is the values of the vast majority of people in this Nation that sent this class to Congress are not the ones he shares. And the talk of, we can't afford this, while telling our Judiciary Committee and our Oversight Committee that we can't ask questions about no-bid contracts and billions of dollars lost is unacceptable. And it is unacceptable because it stops in this Chamber. We are here to represent the districts of the people that sent us here, and we have an obligation by article I to fulfill those.

So this issue of SCHIP is not the smoke and mirrors you're hearing. It's, bottom line, covering our children. The issue of VA funding is simply, bottom line, X number of veterans, X number of costs this Nation should provide it. If you choose not to do that, then have the courage to tell the American people you are more interested in a tax cut to the top 1 percent than caring for children and veterans. But we won't hear that because this is about elections. This is about a vision of America that extends to next November.

This group gathered here tonight is about a vision of America that extends to the next generation, one that once again puts us in our rightful place.

So I couldn't be more proud. The gentleman from Florida has been a longtime advocate of caring for those in our society, the least fortunate, as well as making a fair society and growing opportunities. It's what we're all about. The old used-up cliches don't resonate with the public anymore. The old used-up cliches are nothing more than a way to try and hold on to a political ideology that is dead in this country, and it's time has passed. And we are once again here to reassert that.

So with that, I yield back to my esteemed colleague from Florida and look forward to the rest of our conversation.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Thank you very much, the gentleman from Minnesota.

We have a very, very special guest today, an honorary member of our freshman class, a senior Member of the Congress, the gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, who'd like to join us and add something to our conversation.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Well, my first act is to give my greatest appreciation for this caring and vested freshman class, front liners, front



thinkers, front runners running toward the next generation. I cannot thank you enough for joining this Congress with one mission, and that is that we are, servants of America.

And I've asked today, officially, on the record, to get that article I pin, and to reemphasize the language that my good friend has before him by just holding up the Constitution and reinforcing the language that all powers herein granted shall be vested in the Congress of the United States, which shall consist of the Senate and the House.

And I just want to speak, somewhat weaving in to this idea of veterans and the war in Iraq and why we have the ability even to address that question of the Iraq war, because as my colleagues know, there was never a constitutional declaration of war. It was statutory. That was in the fall of 2002 when, by public law, we gave the President simply an opportunity to negotiate and then ultimately, if necessary, to use force.

So I raise the question, because Congress has, in some sense, been stifled by others not thinking the way the American people have asked us to think and act, and that is to focus resources on veterans, on the domestic agenda, and to be able to say that we have, in essence, finished our job in Iraq.

And so I wanted to offer to my good friends H.R. 4020 that the chairman of the Veterans Committee has joined me in offering, or introducing, which calls itself the Military Success Act. And of course all eyebrows will be raised. Sounds conflicted. But I thought and thought about this, and I continue to hear the terminology, cut-and-run, not willing to support the troops. So we went to the Pentagon, and in this legislation we chronicle all of the successes of the United States Military, in particular in Iraq. We do it in Iraq and not Afghanistan because that's an ongoing mission. We know that there's more work to be done there. And we come to a conclusion, and I'll just briefly read this: That the public law that we voted on in 2002 authorized by the President to use military force against Iraq, it goes on to list the indicia or the points of that bill. And it concludes by saying, according to that public law, we believe that, in fact, all of this has been achieved. A simple statement. It doesn't follow up by saying, come home. Of course, that's what I would suggest once you read a statement that says all that you were asked to do, the United States Military, you've achieved it. And we finish this up by calling on America to have days of proclamation and ribbons, and as these soldiers come home, unlike Vietnam, that we actually have days of recognition for those soldiers. And ultimately it finishes, because I heard my distinguished colleague speak of veterans, by giving these returning soldiers a \$5,000 stipend.

Now, this does not leave out Afghanistan soldiers. This really appeals or

deals with the whole idea of the fact that their mission is completed. We do it in a way to call it a military success. And we know that there are many other things that need to be done. But what that does is it gives Congress the power to make its own statement that the initiative that we voted for, statutory, the public law in 2002 that gave powers is now being brought to an end, that we, as a Congress, are saying that we applaud our military, and those resources that are now being used for the war, \$120 billion, can be used for SCHIP, can be used to fix Medicare.

I sat down with some seniors who wanted us to fix the prescription part D. They said, Can you help us? Can you get back in there and help us to understand it?

And then of course, what it does, it honors our soldiers. It dashes this whole cut-and-run, this whole accusation of being nonpatriotic.

And so I thank my colleagues for letting me present H.R. 4020 in conjunction with the recognition of article I. This bill was introduced today. I encourage my colleagues to sign on. We think that it has a very important statement as to the authority of the Congress and the responsibilities of the Congress to control a statute that it gave powers, and seemingly the President is not willing to acknowledge that the task and the job is well done on behalf of the United States Military in Iraq. We can do better, and I think the American people are waiting for the article I-ers to take charge so that we can get back on our agenda of serving the American public.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to join an important debate. I look forward to the article I pin.

And finally, I hope that the American public will get it, knowing that the Congress has to have the authority to go forward on their behalf.

This legislation, the "Military Success in Iraq Commemoration Act of 2007," recognizes the extraordinary performance of the Armed Forces in achieving the military objectives of the United States in Iraq, encourages the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe a national day of celebration commemorating the military success of American troops in Iraq, and provides other affirmative and tangible expressions of appreciation from a grateful nation to all veterans of the war in Iraq.

As I have stated many times, "when our heroic young men and women willingly sacrifice life or limb on the battlefield, the nation has a moral obligation to ensure that they are treated with respect and dignity. One reason we are the greatest nation in the world is because of the brave young men and women fighting for us in Iraq and Afghanistan. They deserve honor, they deserve dignity, and they deserve to know that a grateful nation cares about them."

My legislation, the Military Success in Iraq Commemoration Act of 2007, H.R. 4020 pays fitting tribute to the valor, devotion, and heroism of those who fought in Iraq in the following ways:

A. Provides an express acknowledgment by the Congress that the objectives for which the

AUMF resolution of 2002 authorized the use of force in Iraq were achieved by the Armed Forces of the United States, which performed magnificently in battle;

B. Recounts several notable achievements of the Armed Forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom;

C. Authorizes the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the American people to observe a national day of celebration commemorating the Armed Forces' military success in Iraq. This will help ensure that the Iraq War does not suffer the fate of other open-ended engagements like the Korean War, which is often called the "Forgotten War";

D. Authorizes funds to be appropriated and awarded by the Secretary of Defense to state and local governments to assist in defraying the costs of conducting suitable "Success in Iraq" homecoming and commemoration activities and in creating appropriate memorials honoring those who lost their lives in the war. Many of the casualties in the Iraq War come from small towns and villages in rural or economically depressed areas. The local governments are already facing substantial fiscal pressures and need help coming up with the necessary; and

E. Creates a program and authorizes funds to be appropriated pursuant to which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall award to each veteran of the Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom a grant of \$5,000 to facilitate the transition to civilian life. We don't want veterans to end up homeless or unemployed or unable to take their kids on a vacation or start a business. This \$5,000 bonus is but a small token of the affection the people of the United States have for those who risked their lives so that we may continue to live in freedom.

Outside my office there is a poster board with the names and faces of those heroes from Houston, Texas who have lost their lives wearing the uniform of our country. It is humbling to recognize how lucky we are to live in a nation where so many brave young men and women volunteer knowing they may be called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice so that their countrymen can enjoy the blessings of liberty. The intent of my legislation is to pay fitting tribute to these great men and women and to let them know they will not be forgotten. I request and welcome your support in making this message heard.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. And I thank the gentlewoman from Texas. This is exactly what this Congress is doing. It's coming up with a lot of new ideas that need to be put out there, debated, discussed, and hopefully passed. And I'd like to turn it back over to Mr. Article I himself, the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank the gentleman, and I have a button for the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas, and I look forward to giving it to her. I thank her for endorsing the type of emphasis that we're trying to place on this very important discussion of the balance of powers in this country.

You know, there's another element to this whole question, a balance of powers, and it really is reflected in the debate over the SCHIP program. Because while we debate, on the one hand, the actual legislative powers and

how we might enforce those through the courts and so forth, there's another competition going on, and it's the competition that goes on in the media and in the public dialogue. And here is where there is an inherent advantage for the executive branch. And I think part of the reason why, over the last few decades, the executive branch has been able to accumulate far more power than the Constitution and the Founding Fathers envisioned was because it is much easier for the President of the United States to use the bully pulpit, as we call it, and dominate time and the news media and the television, and it's much harder for the Congress to do that since we are a body comprising 535 men and women.

□ 1915

But what's interesting about it is that when you use the bully pulpit and when the President uses the bully pulpit, you hope that he uses it in an honest way, and, in fact, in this debate what we have seen is a performance that has actually been very insulting to the concept of a pulpit, I think, because what this President has done is used his bully pulpit, his media access, to deceive the American people about what we are doing and what he intends to do.

For instance, he is constantly saying that the proposal, the legislation that we passed would enable families making \$83,000 a year to access the SCHIP program. No families making \$83,000 were authorized to make it or, in fact, ever found access to the SCHIP program. The only way that a family making more than double the poverty level can get entrance and access to the SCHIP program is if the executive branch gives them a waiver. In fact, the State of New York asked the President for a waiver. He declined it. So for him to then say under this program people making \$83,000 would be eligible for SCHIP is not only not true, it is deceitfully dishonest. And, actually, if you talk about what he has done, he has the power, which we delegated to him, he has the power through the executive branch to waive some of these requirements.

And that goes back to the interesting thing about this entire debate. In 2004 during the Presidential campaign, President Bush actually campaigned for an expansion of the SCHIP program. He loved the SCHIP program. He applauded it when he was Governor of Texas and he wanted to expand it. Now what does he do? Because it's not a Congress dominated by his party, he wants to change his perspective. He's changed his perspective as to whether the States should have waiving powers, which he wanted the States to have when the Congress was run by the Republicans. Now that Democrats control the Congress, he wants there to be Federal standards which he controls.

So this is not just a battle of power internally in the Congress and through the courts but also one that we have to

fight in the media. We are at a disadvantage, but I hope it is discussions like this and people who are not afraid to be outspoken and point out dishonesty and deceit when they see it that will help us even the playing field in terms of convincing the American people that not only does this Congress have the power, by virtue of article I, to make all legislative decisions, but it also has the moral foundation and the integrity to do what's right for the American people.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I thank the gentleman.

We are down to our last couple of minutes, so I'm going to turn it over to Mr. HODES and then Mr. COHEN if you want to wrap it up.

Mr. HODES. Thank you, Mr. KLEIN.

What we are talking about here really is the moral compass of our Nation. We have a stark choice before us. There is a huge difference between what the President values and what the American people value.

To the President and his allies, \$190 billion for a failed war is a necessity, but \$35 billion to give our kids access to doctors is some kind of extravagance. And that really talks about the values that are at play here. Are we going to value and speak up for the people of this country, or are we going to let the President assert values that we in this country don't agree with because we value kids?

Now, there is a President, a former President who really said it best because we here in Congress are no longer simply going to enable this President to take power which should not be his. We are going to reassert, in these conversations and in our conduct, the power that rightfully belongs to the Congress and to the people. Because as Abraham Lincoln said, when we were engaged in the midst of a great civil war that was to determine the fate of this country, he talked about government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

That's why we are here tonight. That is why we were sent to Congress. To reassert that this government is a government of the people, by the people, for the people. And while we are on this watch, it shall not perish, and we are going to stand up to this President and we are going to have some checks and balances in the United States of America.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. KLEIN.

I think when I first addressed this group and, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned how proud I was to be a Member of this body and this class, and I think the people who have listened to this discussion realize why I'm so proud to be a member of the class. The talent is here, as some people have State legislative experience, some come straight from the private sector, and each brings a different perspective but a concern for the people and a concern for change and direction of this country and for the middle class.

Mr. HODES talked about Ms. Miers and Mr. Rove not obeying the subpoena

that was issued for them to come to testify before the Congress. This Congress is looking at having a contempt charge brought against them, which I think we should have done earlier. We need to have a contempt charge brought, and we need to have them be punished for their contempt of this Congress, which, in essence, is a contempt of the American people and a contempt of the Constitution and of all things good that the American people stand for.

I am proud to be a member of this class, to support SCHIP, for health care for children and for all Americans.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I thank my colleagues for being here this evening.

We do this once a week. We're looking forward to seeing you all next week and having this continuation of discussion. And, of course, we look forward to working with everyone in this country to make sure that we resolve and come to some successful conclusions on some of these issues that are so important to our country.

#### THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ELLISON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a great privilege and honor to come back to the floor of the House and present some alternative views, some views that I hope are more grounded in truth as this is another edition of the Official Truth Squad. We've heard some interesting comments over the last hour and over the last few days and weeks and months. So, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor to be designated by our leadership to come and share some words with this Chamber.

I would first comment about the relative tone and the divisiveness of the language that we have just heard. It just astounds me that people think who come to Washington that our constituents want us to be divisive. When I go home, what I hear from folks is that they want us to work together, that they want us to work together positively for solutions. So the class warfare debate that we have just experienced over the last hour is truly remarkable, as one Member talked about the spirit of Lincoln, a proud Republican, and what he brought to our Nation. A government of the people, by the people, and for the people is what he championed. He also championed an end to class warfare. So I would encourage my colleagues to read further in history and to expand their vision of what it is that their constituents truly want. And as I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, my constituents, our constituents, I think, want us to work together.

This is the Official Truth Squad. This is a group of folks who come to the floor and have an opportunity to address our colleagues and hopefully